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The CIA And Iraq 9

A HOWE OF outrage has arisen in Washington against the Central Intelligence Agency for failing, as is supposed, to detect and report the maturing plot by the Cairo-Moscow conspiracy to murder King Faisal and seize power in Iraq.

A defense of the CIA would be beside the point as is, moreover, the reflection that, if our chief intelligence agency was caught flatfooted, so too were those of the king, the shrewd Nuri es-Said, the British and the neighboring Turks. According to reports from Baghdad which may be little more than rumors, Faisal's assassination was supervised by his most trusted military aide, the captain of his palace guard.

From such information as has now reached Washington it would appear that the Baghdad coup was a masterpiece of stealth, plotted down to tiny detail in the Soviet Union's foreign espionage GHQ at Bern, Switzerland.

The CIA, it should be said, had the simultaneous plot to murder King Hussein of Jordan in hand. In

collaboration with the British espionage network the CIA was able to uncover a Nasserite scheme to murder King Idris of Libya and take over that immense neighbor of Egypt by coup. (The British, it will be recalled, landed paratroopers in Tripoli soon after the Marines went into Lebanon.) The CIA likewise was able to alert the strong, pro-Western government of Sudan against similarly violent machinations in Cairo. If a rough generalization is permissible, it would be that conspiracies hatched in Cairo can be more easily penetrated than the practiced allduggery of Bern.

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WE CAN UNDERSTAND why the pro-Nasser (and by extension pro-Khrushchev) party in Washington should be striding at the public prestige and acceptance of the CIA. That organization is, despite its presumed failure in Iraq, our first line of defense against the worldwide sapping operations of Moscow. We are not quite as clear as to why enemies of Moscow, such as Fulton Lewis, should be so hellbent against Allen Dulles and his apparatus.